

**Meeting Minutes**  
Town of Acton Community Preservation Committee  
January 11, 2007  
Acton Public Library

Attending: Jon Benson, Peter Berry, Tory Beyer, Catherine Coleman, Walter Foster, Andy Magee, Susan Mitchell-Hardt, Ken Sghia-Hughes, Ed Starzec, Nancy Tavernier

Chair Catherine Coleman opened the meeting at 7:35 PM.

**1. Applicant Presentation: Faulkner Room Ceiling Repair (Town of Acton)**

Applicant Dean Charter stated the Board of Selectmen has voted to withdraw this application as the project needs to proceed immediately.

**2. Approval of Minutes from 1/4/07**

The minutes of the 1/4/07 meeting were approved with amendments.

**3. Old Business: Update on Bonding Feasibility**

Roland Bartl distributed a sheet summarizing general “rules of thumb” for bond financing, including examples for the River Street Dam and 468 Main Street projects. Roland explained that there are a variety of rules and regulations governing maximum payback term for different classes of projects. Nancy Tavernier noted that the committee should not propose bonding that would require annual payments in excess of the town’s contribution to the CPC fund in the event that the state match is reduced or eliminated. Peter Berry noted that a 2/3 Town Meeting vote is required to authorize bonding and thus bonding projects would need to be voted on separately from the others. Peter also noted that the amount bonded would need to remain within the town’s “cap” and that issuing bonds requires payment of a fee. Peter added that there is some difference of opinion as to whether bonds issued for CPC projects would be considered “general obligation” bonds or “revenue” bonds.

**4. Applicant Presentation: Purchase/Reuse of 468 Main Street (Town of Acton)**

Applicant Dean Charter stated that the Town Manager and the Board of Selectmen were still discussing how best to proceed with the project. Mr. Charter indicated that the Town is not withdrawing the application but requesting more time to make a decision. Mr. Charter indicated that he hopes the Town could reach a decision in the next few weeks.

Mr. Charter indicated that the Town’s thinking regarding the property is shifting from an affordable housing focus towards office space. Nancy Tavernier indicated that the ACHC has discussed the property and ruled it out for affordable housing because of ongoing maintenance challenges related to older homes and the expense of upgrades necessary to get DHCD sign off. ACHC would be interested in the rear lot at a future date.

Mr. Charter agreed that extensive work would be required to renovate the home, including a new roof, windows, rear deck, and remediation related to asbestos-containing materials and lead paint. Noting the property's proximity to the town common across the street, Mr. Charter stated that "in an ideal world" the town would purchase the property with CPA funds this year, undertake planning for its reuse, and then return for additional CPA funding for appropriate portions of the project next year.

Some discussion followed of the issue of using CPA funds for a project which may not entirely qualify for CPA funding.

Neighbor Kim Smith asked if citizen input would be considered in the Town's deliberations regarding the reuse of the property. Mr. Charter replied affirmatively. Mr. Smith expressed concerns with non-residential uses, particularly as relates to buffers, screening, and lighting. Bob Guba expressed general concern with the application.

#### **5. Applicant Presentation: Athletic Field Lighting (ABYB/ABRSD)**

Applicant Mike Coppolino presented an overview of the project, noting that the primary beneficiary of the project would be the community, not the school system. Mr. Coppolino clarified that the project's minimum goal for private fund raising was \$110,000 such that the request to the CPC would be less than \$150,000. Representatives of several athletic leagues were present to express support for the project.

Peter Berry asked for some clarification regarding contributions from the schools and the leagues. Community Education is contributing \$15,000 and the leagues are fund raising as well as providing for a portion of annual maintenance. Mr. Berry requested letters of support from the soccer group and Community Education. Mr. Berry asked if the School Committee had voted its support. Mr. Coppolino indicated that the committee expressed general support in its September meeting.

Some questions followed regarding the intermunicipal agreement and whether or not the schools will truly not realize any benefit from the lighting. Andy Magee indicated that he would like to review and approve the agreement before a vote.

Mr. Magee asked if the tennis court lights would be operated via "push button" and Mr. Coppolino indicated that they would. Hours of operation are not yet set but would likely allow baseball until 9:30PM and tennis until 10PM. The lights would be shielded to reduce leakage into the night sky.

Walter Foster seconded Mr. Magee's interest in reviewing the intermunicipal agreement and requested that the agreement be flexible enough to take into account the potential for increased school use of the facilities. Mr. Coppolino indicated that he is using the Leary Field agreement as a model. Mr. Foster also asked if there were

cost overruns would the group be back next year for additional funding? Mr. Coppolino indicated that the group would seek to make up any deficit via fundraising. Mr. Foster asked if there could be any potential cost savings realized by bundling this project with the Elm Street lights.

Ken Sghia-Hughes asked about the life expectancy of the lighting. Mr. Coppolino replied that a 25 year warranty is standard, including bulbs. Mr. Sghia-Hughes asked if the project budget had been reduced in light of removing the clay from the proposal. Mr. Coppolino indicated yes, that the budget had gone down by \$5,000 to \$6,000.

#### **6. Applicant Presentation: Open Space Set Aside (Town of Acton)**

Applicant Andy Magee presented an overview of the application, noting that it has changed since submitted to include a set-aside of \$350,000 plus an additional \$100,000 to acquire a 12.1 acre parcel of land off of Nagog Hill Road (known as the Groener land).

There followed some discussion related to the administration and/or control of the open space set aside and the working definition of open space as it applies to the Community Preservation Act. Nancy Tavernier indicated concern that the set aside funds would only be used for “pristine” open space parcels and not less pristine land such as the River Street parcel. Andy Magee indicated that he thought the set aside funds could be used for the open space portion of a project like River Street, although he noted that the wetlands portion of the site likely has minimal value. Mr. Magee noted that there is a constituency in Acton who see the CPA as an open space oriented program.

#### **7. New Business/Comments**

Roland Bartl will revise the project table in light of the withdrawn project and calculate the totals for the next meeting. It was noted that it may be difficult to reach the 10% level for affordable projects this cycle.

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 PM.